

Reply to Office Action  
Appl. No.: 09/751,121 Art Unit: 3624

Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Re: Filing of observations addressing each of the individual deficiencies as indicated in the examination by the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

Sir:

In response to the Office Action of November 13, 2004, please enter the following items in the file of the above patent application:

Remarks relative to rejected Claims 32 – 36 and to cited prior art.

A petition for extension of time for three (3) months (small entity) accompanies this submission.

#### REMARKS

Historical background information relative to Mr. Abendroth's submittal to the United States Patent Office includes the original filing date of December 26, 2000 which had Claims 1 - 36. The United States Patent Office Disposition of Claims indicated a rejection of Claims 1 – 36. All of the submitted claims were rejected on the basis of being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regarded as the invention. Claim 1 was to be redrafted in the proper English and claim format. Clarification was requested in others, acronyms like "RFB" were to be written as "Request for Bids" both in the claim language and in the Specification. The claims appeared to be in recitation format found in the Specification and were not examinable in that present claim format. MPEP 608.01(n) for Form of Claims and review the claim formats of enclosed references were to be used as a guide for a re-submittal. Also, method claims were to contain method steps for performing the process – not mixing method steps with system steps in the body of a claim.

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Ironically, the United States Patent Office's recitation example for such a step in Claim 1 indicated a complete misunderstanding of the inventive step by misstating the process. Also, the inference was made that Claim 2 used phrases causing a clarity problem. Then in like manner, Claims 2 - 36 were stated to have similar problems and would not be reviewed until a redrafting and correction of the claims was completed in order for the Examiner to give the claims a proper examination on the merits.

Mr. Abendroth's reply to the United States Patent Office action of April 6, 2004 (April 2, 2004) cancelled Claims 1 – 31 and replaced them with new claims 37 – 66 to meet the aforementioned stated re-drafting requirements with Claims 32 – 36 remaining as original. Now, these new claims have been withdrawn by the United States Patent Office from consideration in their response leaving only the five Claims 32 – 36 original claims previously rejected as being not examinable based on form and language requirements which, as before, have again been rejected, yet this time apparently examinable without any changes having been made. The aforementioned first rejection of Claims 1 – 36 and subsequent withdrawing of Claim 37 – 66 is most disappointing as well as confusing for much time, effort and expense has been expended initially to present the first submittal of inventive steps of this application followed by a simplification of language and format in the subsequent submittal, yet to no avail. To reject out of hand without an in depth review in an attempt to truly understand the subject-matter and guide the applicant with a meaningful response, literally gutting the application by removing from examination the unique and important supporting dependent claimed inventive steps along with the independent method and system claims is most frustrating. It has now been approximately four and one half years since the original submittal which was prepared by very experienced patent attorneys highly skilled in the art, Quarles & Brady, LLP; yet, the merits of the application

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for patent have been presently just set aside. This applicant respectfully requests that the United States Patent Office re-address the prior submittals and comment on the full content of all of the claims. If such a review is not the intent of the United States Patent Office, this applicant reserves the right to file a Divisional Application to re-submit the original Claims 1 – 36 as well as the new Claims 37 – 66 for consideration.

This present applicant's reply to the Office Action will be addressing Claims 32 – 36 along with indicating areas of inventive steps within the claim withdrawn from consideration or those originally submitted as well as addressing the two specific cited prior art along with brief remarks relative to prior art made of record and not relied upon yet considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure as indicated in the United States Patent Office Actions.

Claims 32 – 36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over (US 6,035,289) Chou et al, hereafter Chou in view of (US 6,6064,981) Barni et al, hereafter Barni.

The following general remarks briefly address the two United States Patent Office cited possible prior art, Chou and Barni, and obvious to one skilled in the art references, in conjunction with the subsequent individual explanation responses to the United States Patent Office's deficiency assertions, to definitively show that the subject-matter of Mr. John C. Abendroth's claims are indeed inventive steps:

The Chou approach dealing exclusively in containerized ocean transportation does not even come close to many of the very important distinguishing elements in this applicant's submittal.

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The United States Patent Office has inadvertently miss-characterized Mr. Abendroth's invention. This applicant has developed a truly Comprehensive Freight Management Method and System, not simply an online platform or trading module for an electronic auction, reverse auction or typical bidding process.

The Chou approach is directed very narrowly to a specialized segment of freight transportation addressing customized contracts to offer for auction the bids from ocean carriers and freight forwarders exclusively in containerized ocean transportation, in their case adapting obvious shipping factors, missing others required in their application while completely ignoring many key factors necessarily incorporated within Mr. Abendroth's invention. Chou's adaptation is not an overall freight management method and system integrating all of the individual participating entities and services as never before as is provided by Mr. Abendroth's unique invention incorporating the use of a "grand master bulletin board" concept relative multiple, diverse, fragmented and highly competitive elements to interrelate privately or publicly in operations, combination and independently through a dynamic data driven transportation tool providing unequaled freight management, operations, coordination, communication, combinations and comparisons across various sectors of the industry. Apparently the United States Patent Office, as of the present, has not yet recognized the importance of the substantial differences generated by this fact as it applies specifically to freight transportation and the affiliated networks served.

The other two references cited Chou and Barni in the field of freight transportation would disqualify each other, if one were not to address the unique differences between the two offerings and relied only on basic, obvious, fundamentals and foundations required in any and all freight transportation

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operations. This industry while appearing simple in overview is extremely complex in a multitude of inter-relational elements. The inventive steps necessary to specifically address those many varied bits to achieve dramatically different alternative operational results is what actually and very importantly differentiates the subject-matter of individual applicant claims relating in general to the freight transportation industry and more specifically to freight transportation management.

Chou is an approach incorporating a double auction trade-building method of matching based on feasibility and price/cost heuristics using a one-pass and two pass sequential system addressing a plurality of bid posting and ask records using a very complex mathematical formula sequencing. This finite and extremely restrictive, controlled mathematical selection process method and system completely precludes the necessary flexibility and multiple, varied, open and combination comparative offer, response and selection conclusion elements required in a truly versatile freight transportation management "tool" as presented by Mr. Abendroth.

Barni is an approach narrowly addressing the posting of fixed rates by freight forwarders and carriers for specific lanes in the shipping of containers worldwide, the published or discount rate information to be viewed by customers or buyers of such services. As another option, buyers can negotiate by indicating a specific amount that they will pay for such services and use an Internet interactive auction block to solicit a carrier or freight forwarder for particular lane of interest to accept the amount which is other than their posted or discounted rates to move one or more containers. This again, as with the other cited examples, does not even begin to address the multi-faceted approach to areas of freight transportation management as possible with Mr. Abendroth's application.

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Mr. Abendroth's present patent application according to the European Patent Office does not meet the requirements of Article 52(1) EPC because Claim 1 subject-matter does not involve an inventive step according to Article 56 EPC. This infers, as aforementioned, that the asserted prior art indicated by Chou and Barni addressed in Mr. Abendroth's comments above have included within their submittals all of Mr. Abendroth's claims – an understanding not shared by this applicant and which will be addressed in detail following:

Summarizing Chou, members could exchange quotation and booking orders and post shipments for bids from multiple providers. Received competitive bids from qualified carriers are posted on the web site. Shipper's shipment specifications construct customized contracts to offer for auction bidding. Service providers can search via a few factors and bid and re-bid on any shipment until the auction closes. The shipper chooses the winning bid based on factors in the service provider's reply.

The United States Patent Office has given Chou credit on the basis of being implicit for both a method for a bid reporting method from which a shipper can select one bidder (even though no report format is indicated in the process – in fact, the Chou bids instead may have been transmitted one at a time and viewed individually since a logistics solution parameter was to be part of the selection process by the shipper in which a report format would not work, yet the United States Patent Office has combined a partial functionality offered by Barni assuming it to become a multiple bid listing report and then declaring it to be implicit. Mr. Abendroth's approach uniquely, automatically electronically selects and transmits to the shipper, carrier bids in groups of seven for review and possible selection by the shipper as indicated in claim 7 (as submitted in the original application which was rejected because of form and language, revised in

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a new claim in a revised submittal which, in turn, has been withdrawn from consideration). Also, the anonymous name identification process for both the shippers and the carriers is not at all clear (Immediate? Retractable? Requested? Method?), yet again, Chou is given an implicit pass.

To make an assumption that a person skilled in the art would consider that the transmission of invitations to bid to prospective bidders in Chou would credit Chou with a modification not stated or claimed by combining same with a concept in another claimant's application, Barni, along with indicating that the prospective bidders were to be pre-selected to supposedly be more efficient going from Chou back to Barni and purporting that such an alteration in Chou is not only a fair analysis. Also in both Chou and Barni it would be unreasonable to send invitations to carriers who do not offer certain shipment services, yet that literally misses one of the inventive features offered by Mr. Abendroth's invention, wherein such carriers might well receive such invitations as interlining, brokering, equipment leasing or renting, new lane or region expansion efforts, etc. allow for these additional carrier service opportunities.

Combining the teachings of Chou and Barni however and for whatever reasons along with modifying the shipping method of Chou does not arrive at the subject-matter of claim 32 (original claim 1) – as claim 32 of Mr. Abendroth's revised application along with its numerous supportive dependent claims presently withdrawn from consideration does, in fact, comprise a inventive steps. A review of all of these claims together will indicate the very unique unrivaled approach provided by the grand master bulletin board concept.

The United States Patent Office asserts that none of the dependent claims 1 - 36 (which were rejected) or the revised claims 37 – 66, which have been

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withdrawn from consideration and claims 32 – 36 remaining rejected even in combination with those to which they refer meet the requirements relative to inventive-steps. The thrust of these claims has been merely set aside without review. Certain claims, which might initially appear to duplicate prior art in either the real or the electronic world necessarily appear in all freight transportation approaches such as having both shippers and carriers participate, or having a shipper make a request for bids, or having carriers submitting bids on such a request, as has taken place in freight transportation industry since its inception, all of which should be considered implicit in any freight method and system, are not the thrust of Mr. Abendroth's application but stand only as operationally necessary base components from which spring, in this applicant's revolutionary new Method and System for E-commerce Freight Management, the new subject-matter in support of the claims.

This application for patent brings truly inventive-steps in overall freight transportation management -- not just providing more efficiency or the optimization of typical implicit freight operations. Making a narrow interpretation which disallows even the mentioning of typical base components in claims would both produce confusion and a lack of clarity while losing the context of both asserted independent and relevant dependent claims, subsequently disallowing most every even remotely relevant patent applications or approaches including the presently referenced Chou and Barni as well as previously referenced but not relied upon asserted prior art but considered pertinent to Mr. Abendroth's disclosure in the original submittal, Chou et al (US 6,035,289) and indicated above, Kara (US 6,233,568) and O'Neill et al (US 6,219,653), as well as, in the revised application Chou and Barni also indicated above along with other made of record prior art previously referenced but not relied upon yet considered



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pertinent to Mr. Abendroth's disclosure, Hunt et al (US 5,835,716), Carroll et al (US 5,337,246), Hafner et al (US 5,893,076) and Altendahl et al (US 6,571,213).

Relative to claim 32, again Chou is being credited with additional concepts silent within its claims, the flexibility of differentiation in areas and system approach being critical both in being able to effectively electronically and meaningfully incorporate the data within the system process to obtain the varied alternatives and versatility of use in the results. Chou is an entirely different approach, completely unlike Mr. Abendroth's application in its results, intent and functionality. As aforementioned, Chou incorporates a double auction trade-building method of matching based on feasibility and price/cost heuristics using a one-pass and two pass sequential system addressing a plurality of bid posting and ask records using a very complex mathematical formula sequencing (See col. 6, line 52 through col. 15, line 6.).

One trained in the art can see by reviewing the high level mathematical formulas certainly developed by one with an extensive mathematical education shown in the above listed ten columns within Chou's application indicate an approach that restrictively controls the results, lacking flexibility and disallowing combination, multiple and relative use incorporation with its results found in Mr. Abendroth's freight transportation management application providing a truly unique transportation tool. Simply indicating that one is using parts of a list of parameters does not indicate prior art in the invention. How those parts are used and the complete flexibility, purpose and use of the subsequent choices is paramount.

The subject-matter of claim 32 as features in original claim 1 are inventive steps for the reasons such as automatically, electronically selecting and

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transmitting to shippers, carriers bid responses in a bid report in groups of seven for review and possible selection along others previously stated in this response.

Claims 33 – 36 do, in fact, contain features which in combination with the features of any claim to which they refer do meet requirements with respect to inventive steps. Unfortunately the United States Patent Office has, up to this point in time, refused to review all of the claims in Mr. Abendroth's application on their merits.

Combining Barni with Chou to reveal a carrier's name and phone number to the shipper, initially working on a completely anonymous basis, Chou is now being given the telephone number option by assuming that a skilled person would implement that step in such a manner after a carrier selection by the shipper. Claim 33, while offering an anonymous open system approach, electronically presents the carrier information to the shipper immediately following a shipper's selection, but this applicant's system also incorporates the use of private access networks in which all shipper names, carrier names and complete respective profiles are known as an important part of the system.

Claim 34 as stated in relation with the supporting claims addressing transportation brokers and third party logistics (3PL) are not known in the state of the art or as indicated in the electronic auction systems of Chou or Barni as it is applied in this application. First, this is not a typical auction system as previously indicated and second, loads offered by brokers or 3PLs can be duplicate offerings of those by the original shipper, combined offerings, separate offerings, fixed or revised offerings all so indicated by prefixes and/or suffixes, none of which would be found with either Chou or Barni.

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Claims 35 and 36 relating to prior explanations of other claims within this reply necessarily address a plurality of loads to an individual carrier, as a carrier being offered only one load would not be in business very long especially if that carrier were not successful in obtaining that one load. In addition, shippers necessarily will need to receive bids from a plurality of loads from a plurality of carriers, the methodology of this process being, as aforementioned, unique.

A listing of subject-matter and inventive steps contained in other claims not being examined by the United States Patent Office in Mr. Abendroth's application follow:

1. Unique revising of archived texts does not merely generate requests more efficiently but addresses revisions or changes due to errors by the shipper in previously submitted requests automatically adding letter suffixes indicating to carriers that the original request is no longer valid being superceded by the revised request. In addition various combinations of requests can be grouped for comparative pricing. Also, an entire year of freight can be entered for an annualized bid request along with both text and graphic load and loading specifications along with instructions can be downloaded into the requests.

2. Other shipping entities can use a system such as transportation brokers and third party logistics companies differently that that known in the state of the art. However Mr. Abendroth asserts far more offering a very powerful transportation tool ability not capable of being provided by the other referenced submittals or at all being obvious to a skilled person – in fact, it is truly unique. Bids from multiple shippers are additionally defined by prefixes and suffixes.

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3. Chou and Berni, as aforementioned, are entirely different applications addressing in a very fixed manners, specific fundamentals generating totally foreign results both unrelated to Mr. Abendroth's application as well as categorically restrictive which would deem the Cho and Berni approach completely unable to address the myriad of new versatile freight transportation parameters handled through Mr. Abendroth's inventive steps relative to shipper and carrier access.

4. Chou and Barni are very narrowly directed. Mr. Abendroth's automatic, electronically system selected and transmitted to shipper, carrier bid responses in groups of seven allowing for multiple inter-related areas and multiple combinations of alternatives in a totally different flexible use format tied into a "grand master bulletin board" concept is absolutely nothing like D2. To give D2 offering truncated portions of general aspects credit for unrelated isolated specific parts of Mr. Abendroth's application which in total address, in a manner never before envisioned, the myriad aspects comprising a unique and extremely flexible transportation tool approach to freight transportation management is awarding patent protection to another for concepts not provided, intended or perceived by that applicant.

5. United States Patent Office has without question totally misunderstood the aforementioned "grand master bulletin board" subject-matter and therefore has incorrectly decided that nothing offered by the system comprises an inventive step. Being able to include all related facets of differing areas of transportation relative services on one all encompassing "grand master bulletin board" is an enormous concept requiring unique interrelating indexing with category prefixes and suffix abbreviations within the confines of a very flexible presentation, multiple interrelated offer, request and response, services format, with the

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capability of being delivered in changeable expanded or restricted areas to a huge field of specific differing participating entities. The unique transportation tool provided by the inventive steps within Mr. Abendroth's application allows for a flexibility and versatility in freight transportation management as never before possible.

6. The mirroring at other sites for the purpose of having Internet site backup to help prevent a degradation of services should one of the database servers not function properly, a standard practice with any and all Internet site operations along with filtering, sorting, saving, archiving and deleting of information on bulletin boards also being standard action in the field of text processing, Mr. Abendroth's submittal, while providing all of the aforementioned, also addresses substantially different additional operational elements through the use of the grand master bulletin board approach. Additional fractionalized mirroring along with variability in individual column identification as well as the number of columns of separate and private networks all integrated via the grand master bulletin board allows for thousands of shippers, third party logistics companies, brokers, carriers, etc. to function autonomously without sacrificing network to network, site to site communication all available on their own individual sites.

7. Merely linking tracking, tracing, proof of delivery, billing, financial services, etc. to the Internet sites as may be a general practice with online marketplaces and portals along with the use of hyperlinks to other information sources is in and of itself not new, Mr. Abendroth's approach additionally addresses order entry, procurement, warehousing, etc. with multiple screens, but also provides for the integration of numerous differing service providers load numbering assignments for an individual load request, throughout its complete load cycle.

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8. Equipment likened to a load can be offered by carriers to shippers along with specific origins and/or destinations. Leased or rented equipment likened to a load can be similarly addressed. Multiple delivered loads likened to a load, groups of loads likened to a load, tours for loads likened to a load, products likened to a load, warehousing likened to a load and other services likened to a load all being able to be addressed through the grand master bulletin board through the use of prefixes in the load nomenclature as well as descriptive phrasing substitution capabilities within the method and system along with additional bulletin board columns. Being able to then simultaneously view interrelationships of loads, equipment and service options on which to make decisions presents far more than merely a shipper request carrier bidding network but rather defines another inventive step in the transportation tool offering in overall freight transportation management.

9. Anonymity of the names of the shippers and carriers in an open system and knowing the names of the shippers and carriers in a private system or private access network, in both situations concealing the actual bids from all other bidders is unlike Chou and Berni, in which all vendors (carriers), with their names known or unknown, have the amount of their submitted bids known to the other bidders in an auction type system is exactly the opposite of the approach claimed by Mr. Abendroth's inventive freight transportation management concept. This applicant's method and system is a universal transportation tool, not a cutthroat system allowing for one competitor to beat out another competitor by knowingly bidding just a few dollars under another's submitted amount – with even a one cent difference meaning success.

10. Adding a function that does not exist to the system indicated in Chou and then stating that it is obvious to equip a system in such a manner, when it is not

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obvious, and finally using that constructed situation to deny a valid claim appears arbitrary. Mr. Abendroth's method and system provides for totally separate functions, as a carrier (or third party) is able to just not submit a bid when requested or actually indicate that a bid will not be submitted, giving the shipper multiple options. Other uses that are also quite separate and are dramatically different in their result, like addressing bidding by carriers for the movement or re-location of empty containers back to port cities or other places as might be requested by the owners of the offered containers. A unique negative, zero or positive bidding option allows for one, more or all of the containers offered to be re-located by a container owner, bid on by carriers at no cost or even generating revenue for the container owners in some cases.

11. This applicant offers a method and system that also permits the entire operation and functionality from start to finish throughout the approach to be addressed via facsimile converted electronically using optical character recognition programs, via the internet, via e-mail and via telephone incorporating the use of interactive voice response (IVR), all electronically incorporated into the system.

12. The method and system delves deep into carrier profile information as the variables are extremely complex and variable along with allowing shippers to override any and all carrier profile and/or specification factors in sending invitation to bid to carriers – this flexibility is quite important for numerous reasons in addressing the myriad of interlining, rental, broker, etc. relationships within the freight transportation industry not present in other applications. In addition it offers an automatic denial of carriers' (vendors') bid submittals to individual shippers (buyers) who might well meet carriers' shipper qualifications but one with which, for whatever reason, the carriers will not do business.

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13. The method and system provides shipper (buyer) profile information to carriers (vendors) along with offering an automatic denial of information to individual carriers who might well meet buyers' carrier qualifications but one with which, for whatever reason, the shippers will not do business.

14. The method and system uses a central processing system and/or database and/or its components be they on the Internet and/or remote from the Internet. The use of such a central processing system, etc. is indicated as required within this applicant's claims to address technical operating features; however, some of which would necessarily be found in Chou and Barni as well as in any other Internet processing system addressing other areas and operations. This assumes that there is no assertion that the use of such a central processing system or database is disallowed or credited solely to Chou or Barni or else all Internet system applications for whatever purpose would be suspect.

15. The method and system allows for both shippers and carriers to be included on many individual shipper and/or carrier bulletin boards on individual private access networks and/or systems all using different name and load identification numbers and authorization codes, yet via the grand master bulleting board approach along easy use and information access incorporating important data consolidation onto each individual shipper or carrier bulletin board.

16. Multiple screens, sorting and filtering is substantially different from other known techniques. In addition individual customization of separate shipper and carrier bulletin boards giving the appearance of having their own separate systems, along with individual columns and number of columns can also be variable, yet because of both master bulletin boards and the overriding grand



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master bulletin board inventive step, all shippers and carriers and their relative information remain electronically integrated providing real time data transfer creating total versatility in optional interrelationships between all participants in the system.

17. Certain grand master bulletin board options, available at all individual shipper and carrier levels of individual bulleting boards not in any way considered, available or even possible in other methods and systems. This particular multiple screen approach along with the optional simultaneous multiple screen viewing is unlike any known techniques. First the required format is provided within one grand master bulletin board being able to address loads (individual, multiple, combination, backhauls) and/or equipment (availability), and/or tours (routing), and/or products and/or services (warehousing, leasing, renting, financial). And, second, this applicant's approach allows in the multiple screen scenarios the transportation tool to be able interrelate each of these areas as never before possible.

18. All central processing systems require at least one central processing unit, a memory for storing a database and a communication interface to the Internet to work.

Other prior art made of record and not relied upon yet considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure by the United States Patent Office follow. All are considered by Mr. Abendroth, after reviewing their applications, not to be prior art which would render this applicant's submittal unpatentable.

Kara (US 6,233,568) disclosed providing shipping and transportation fees. There is disclosed a system and method for dispensing postage or other

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authorization information electronically by using a portable processor containing a maximum amount of pre-authorized postage which can be applied to any piece of mail or other item. A plurality of shipping service providers may utilize the portable processor to store and dispense credit value for authorization of various shipping services. Accordingly, a user is presented with information regarding various shipping service providers fees and/or services associated with particular shipping/delivery parameters desired by the user in order to make an informed choice as to a most preferable method of shipment.

O'Neill et al (US 6,219,653) disclosed a freight calculation system and method. A freight calculation system includes a seller client, a buyer client, and a platform coupled to the seller client and the buyer client using a communication network. The seller client generates freight data and communicates it using a communications network. The buyer client communicates a delivery request for a load using the communication network. The delivery request specifies one of a number of delivery containers, an origination location, and a destination location. The platform receives and stores the freight data and determines a delivery cost for the load using the freight data, the specified delivery container, the origination location, and the destination location.

Hunt et al (US 5,835,716) disclosed brokering excess carrier capacity. The invention is a method for brokering carrier capacity. The method comprises a dual path, one path that allows entry into a data processing system of available carrier capacity which is comprised of a list of parameters which define that capacity, and the second path which allows access to that capacity. Each entry point to the system has data entry means for either entering carrier capacity or entering a request for available routes, or both. Available capacity entries are confirmed, saved in a transportation database, and assigned a pre-transaction

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code. Path two involves entering a request for available capacity by defining a requested route based upon a list of parameters. The system compares available capacity with the requested route to determine whether or not a match exists. The system operator selects an appropriate matched entry which must then be confirmed. Upon confirmation, selected matches are saved to a transaction database and assigned a transaction code. If no match is determined, then the requested route data is saved in a request database. A request database locator program is then activated for the purpose of querying the transportation database at pre-determined intervals to determine if a matching capacity has been subsequently entered. If a matching capacity has been subsequently entered, then a prompt is sent to the requesting site indicating that a match has been found and that confirmation is required; otherwise, the request database locator program will continue to query the transportation database until the routine is terminated.

Carroll et al (US 5,337,246) disclosed rating adjustment for a particular transaction and user. The present invention relates to a method and system for enabling an authorized user of the system to automatically apply customized rating adjustments to transaction charges. To this end, a structure is employed for supplying to a central processor information identifying criteria for rating and for customized rating adjustments. The central processor compares data entered through an input device with information stored in memory. The central processor, after correlating the identifying information with the entered input data, generates a base rate and a modified rate (which incorporates a customized rating adjustment) for a particular transaction and user. The calculated charges are made available for output to the user.

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Hafner et al (US 5,893,076) disclosed a supplier driven commerce transaction system. A transaction processing system for processing business transactions between a supplier and retailer is provided. The transaction processing system may comprise a retailer processor, a replenishment processor, and a supplier processor. The retailer processor transmits business data from the retailer. The replenishment processor receives the business data and generates suggested business transactions that are communicated to the supplier processor. The supplier processor is operable to selectively modify the suggested business transaction and communicate them to the replenishment processor. The replenishment processor generates actual business transactions.

Altendahl et al (US 6,571,213) disclosed routing a load of one or more shipments of parcels. A router utility and corresponding method for routing a load of one or more shipments of parcels, for use in a system for managing shipping parcels that includes a shipping database and a planning engine that provides load information for the load indicating a load identifier. The router utility includes: an input module for providing the load identifier included in the load information, and an analyzer for providing a carrier and service list. The planning information from the shipping database is organized as a set of tables of field records, including: an address table, for indicating an address and a route identifier based on an address identifier; a shipment header table, for indicating change terms corresponding to a load identifier and for indicating at least one address identifier; rate shop group tables, for indicating one or more routes (a carrier and service); a route identifier priority table, for indicating priority for determining a route identifier based on charge terms; and routing instruction set tables, for indicating instructions for determining a route identifier or a rate shop group based on a route identifier. The routing instruction set tables can include condition fields which the router evaluates in determining what routing

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instructions to use. In addition, all records of the rate shop group table applicable to a shipment are evaluated in combination and set logic can then be used in specifying a group of carriers and services to rate shop.

Schubert et al (WO 02/03287) disclosed a tier driven reverse auction system and method for electronic commerce.

### CONCLUSION

Mr. Abendroth is not amending any of the claims, leaving the wording and context of the claims themselves as originally submitted. Therefore, no additional identifying factors are required by Articles or Rules relative to acknowledging prior art or to cite the passages of the application as filed on which these amendments are based or to provide a showing of consistency in the subject-matter of such amendments.

Mr. Abendroth's explanations relative to the referenced prior art Chou and Burni along with the other prior art made of record and not relied upon yet considered pertinent to Applicant's disclosure fully support that Mr. Abendroth's patent application subject-matter does, in fact, comprise inventive steps as presented in this applicant's submittal, and therefore, Mr. Abendroth's claims 32 - 36 should be allowed and the United States Patent Office should grant a full review of revised claims 37 - 66 presently withdrawn from consideration and/or their original rejected counterparts claims 1 - 31 for his Method and System for E-Commerce Freight Management.

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Respectfully submitted,

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